

REMARKS

The applicant thanks the Examiner for holding a telephone interview with the applicant's attorney on February 19, 2010. During the interview, the Examiner and the attorney discussed the obviousness rejection of claims 1, 7, 9, 11, 13, 15 and 17-21 in view of Yoshida (US 5,699,056) and Myochin (US 2005/0053310). In particular, the attorney noted that the Myochin reference does not disclose or suggest display patterns of map component information increasing in transparency in the claimed manner. The Examiner appeared to agree with the attorney, and noted that, provided that the Myochin reference discloses switching between two or more images and does not disclose increasing or decreasing the transparency of a display pattern on a screen, such an interpretation of the Myochin reference is likely to distinguish the pending claims from the cited references.

In addition, the Examiner suggested some additional claim amendments, which the applicant now adopts. Specifically, the Examiner suggested amending dependent claim 21 to specify that an icon is a type of the display patterns used for displaying the plurality of map component information. The Examiner also suggested adding a new dependent claim that recites that the recited map components include traffic jam information, parking-availability information, and the like. The applicant hereby amends claim 21 and adds new claim 22 with the suggested claim language. In addition, the Examiner suggested that the applicant add a new dependent claim directed to the data structure illustrated in Figs. 2 and 3 of this application. The applicant now adds new claim 23 as suggested by the Examiner. Accordingly, an early and favorable action is respectfully solicited.

Claims 1, 7, 9, 11, 13, 15 and 17-21 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103 in view of Yoshida (US 5,699,056) in view of Myochin (US 2005/0053310).

In particular, in the outstanding Office Action, the Examiner conceded that Yoshida is silent regarding a map information display control device with “a display pattern of the plurality of map component information of which the counted elapsed time exceeds the predetermined time period is displayed with higher transparency than a display pattern of the plurality of map component information of which the counted elapsed time has not exceeded the predetermined time period” as recited in claim 1. However, the Examiner relied on Myochin to disclose or suggest the same (Action, p. 3, l. 22, to p. 4, l. 12).

As discussed during the interview and acknowledged by the Examiner, the Myochin reference does not disclose or suggest “a display pattern of the plurality of map component information of which the counted elapsed time exceeds the predetermined time period [that] is displayed with higher transparency than a display pattern of the plurality of map component information of which the counted elapsed time has not exceeded the predetermined time period” as recited in claim 1. In fact, Myochin does not even disclose or suggest a display pattern on a screen that increases in transparency after the passage of a certain amount of time. Rather, as explained during the interview, Myochin relates to a method of switching between two or more images by forming a composite image in which various portions of the composite image is alternately placed under a mask. Thus, both Myochin and Yoshida fail to disclose or suggest the claimed invention wherein “a display pattern of the plurality of map component information of which the counted elapsed time exceeds the predetermined time period is displayed with higher transparency than a display pattern of the plurality of map component information of which the counted elapsed time has not exceeded the predetermined time period” as recited in claim 1. For similar reasons, Myochin and Yoshida also fail to disclose or suggest the invention now recited in claims 7, 9, 11, 13, 15 and 17-21.

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Accordingly, Yoshida and Myochin, singly or in combination, fail to disclose or suggest the claimed invention, and the applicant respectfully requests the Examiner to withdraw this obviousness rejection.


There are no additional objections or rejections outstanding in this application. Accordingly, in view of the above, claims 1, 7, 9, 11, 13, 15 and 17-23 as amended are believed to be each in condition for allowance, which action, at an early date, is respectfully solicited.

In the event that the Examiner determines that the prosecution of this application may be expedited by a telephone conference, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the number provided below to arrange for an interview.

In the event that this paper is not timely filed, the applicant respectfully petitions for an appropriate extension of time. Please charge any fees for such an extension of time and any other fees which may be due with respect to this paper, to Deposit Account No. 01-2340.

Respectfully submitted,

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Enclosure: Petition for Extension of Time